764 On Votes' burial customs we have a description by Porthan referring to the end of the eighteenth century. According to Porthan, the Votes buried their dead in the graveyard
● 765 in the forest. After the dead person was buried and the grave covered with a big stone, the people remained for about half an hour, singing special songs (loilotukset) and eating. When they finally went away, they left all the remaining food, such as pies, tarts, buckwheat bread and cabbage, and the drinks, such as beer, vodka and honey, to the priest. The mourning ceremony was repeated at the grave twice a year, on Whitsuntide and on the day preceding Michaelmas.

764 At the present time the burial occurs as follows: The corpse is placed on the floor on the straw and washed (this straw is later buried). Then it is lifted on a bench and the eyes are covered. Later it is placed into the coffin and taken to the church. After the priest has blessed the dead person, he is brought home again and then taken to the graveyard. At the end of the burial the people eat at the graveyard peas, eggs, etc. When they come home, they eat again.

527 Not only the weddings and burials, but many other events, memorable days, major agricultural works, etc., are observed with special customs and rites. Below, some of these customs, based on Prof. Rãnk's studies among the Votes in 1942-43, are briefly mentioned. The so-called hlaari-Day (August 31) was closely connected with the well-being of the horses. Formerly the horses were taken to the yard of the church where the priest sprinkled and blessed them. At home, a special

585 The wedding ceremonies of the North Vepsians differ considerably from those of the South Vepsians. A characteristic feature of the North Vepsian wedding is the repetitional arrival of the bridegroom's party to the bride's house on the wedding day and the withdrawal to a neighboring farm. Each time, the representatives of the bride have to go to this farm to ask them to come back. In these goings back and forth, one of the two best men (drushka) plays an important role; wherever they enter, he makes a sign of the cross with his whip on [784] the door. Before the wedding party leaves for the church, the wizard (noid) has to perform several tricks in order to keep off the evil. The wizard and the best men have to keep vigil all the time during the wedding ceremonies so that no bad or jealous person will harm the bridal pair. Harm to the bridegroom is especially feared, lest he be unable to fulfill his duty as a husband during the wedding night.

764 With death are associated several customs. The corpse of an adult is kept for three days in the house, that of a child for two days. Right after death the corpse is washed and his best clothes put on. On the head of a man a cap is placed, on the head of a woman a white bonnet. Then the corpse is lifted onto
• 765 a table under the icons. After the message of death spreads through the village, the people begin to gather in the house of mourning. There weeping songs are sung both in Vepsian and in Russian. Hymns are sung only for well-to-do Vepsians.